

LETTER TO ROBERT ROSS*

Hotel de la Plage. Bearnevil, near
Dieppe,

Monday night, May 31st
(1897).

My dearest Robbie,

I have decided that the only way in which to
get properly is to go to France to receive them.
The Douane charged three francs. How could you frighten me
as you did?
The next time you order boots please come to
Dieppe to get
them sent to you. It is the only way and it will
be an excuse
for seeing you.

I am going to-morrow on a pilgrimage. I
always wanted to
be a pilgrim, and I have decided to start early
to-morrow to
the shrine of Notre Dame de Liesse. Do you
know what
Liesse is? It is an old word for joy. I
suppose the same as
Letizia, Laetitia. I just heard of the shrine or
chapel by chance
to-night, as you would say, from the sweet
woman of the
auberge, who wants me to live always at
Berneville. She says
Notre Dame de Liesse is wonderful, and helps
every one to the
secret of joy—I do not know how long it will take
me to get
to the shrine, as I must walk. But, from what
she tells me,
it will take at least six or seven minutes to get
there, and as
many to come back. In fact the chapel of Notre
Dame de Liesse
is just fifty yards from the hotel. Isn't it
extraordinary? I
intend to start after I have had my
coffee, and then to
bathe. Need I say that this is a miracle? I
wanted to go on a
pilgrimage, and I find the little grey stone chapel
of Our Lady
of Joy is brought to me. It has probably been
waiting for me
all these purple years of pleasure, and now it
comes to meet me
with Liesse as its message. I simply don't know
what to say.
I wish you were not so hard to poor heretics,² and
would admit
that even for the sheep who has no
shepherd there is a
Stella Maris to guide it home. But you and
More, especially
More, treat me as a Dissenter. It is very
painful and quite
unjust.

Yesterday I attended Mass at 10 o'clock and
afterwards

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* Ross and the other friend referred to were Roman
Catholics.